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REPORT NO

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COUNTRY Hungary

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. Because it was so difficult for a family to live on the salary of the father, most Hungarian women were forced to work and to put their children into nurseries or kindergartens during working hours. Because of this, the State was able to get full control of the children at an early age.
2. Large sums of money were spent on the construction and maintenance of nurseries and kindergartens and they were controlled and maintained by the State, the district councils, or factories and enterprises. The nurseries were available for babies from the age of three months to three years while the kindergartens were for children whose ages ranged from three to seven years. Many parents were able to place their children in the nursery operated by the factory or enterprise in which they worked. When none was available, they were able to choose between those run by their district or those run by the State. This cost the parents between six and 24 forints a week for one child but the cost was based on the combined salary of the parents and on the number of dependents and children a couple had. There were a few nurseries where young children could be placed for a month at a time. At these nurseries, children could be taken home as seldom as two weekends a month. The Budapest Capital Streetcar Company (BSZKRT) ran a nursery of this type for its employees. The total monthly cost for the maintenance of one child at this nursery was 800 forints; this sum was paid by the company and the parents contributed as little as 150 to 200 forints.
3. When beginning the education of young children, the Communists attempted to develop an undying devotion toward the Communist state in Hungary and toward the Soviet Union. Methods were adapted to the mental level of the child. For example, three and four-year-old children were taught one song which read in part, ".....our slogan is lasting peace and you must fight for it.....". By the time a child was five or six years old, he had been told of the comparison between the wonderful life under the Communists and the miserable conditions of the population before their "liberation".

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4. When a child entered grammar school, he was required to join the Pioneers. For the first two years, he was a "candidate", but he was "graduated" as a full-fledged member in the third year and received a red scarf. Usually, the children were so excited about receiving this scarf, going through the "graduation" ceremonies, and being a Pioneer, with its summer camps, etc., that parents could do nothing to counteract the Communist indoctrination the children had already received. Once a week, the Pioneers held a "pal" (pajtas) hour. During this period, older members of the group told the younger members about their duties as a Pioneer and, often, gave anti-religious speeches in such a way that even if parents wanted their children to have some religious training, the children would not accept it.
5. All of the textbooks used by first-graders in grammar school had political connotations; even in learning the ABCs, the letters were connected with politics. In the second grade, children were taught to compare the life of workers in capitalist countries with those in the Communist countries and, even in such subjects as arithmetic, political connotations were found. From the fourth to the eighth grades, textbooks contained twice as much about the Soviet Union as about Hungary. Students were constantly told that the Soviet Union was the only country which represented progress and welfare and that they should hate the Western world, particularly the US, because it was the aggressive enemy of socialism. Parents were too exhausted and troubled by the everyday problems of living to counteract these teachings and, in general, could only tell their children not to believe what they were taught at school and to instruct them not to mention anything they heard at home.
6. There were three types of high schools, i.e., humanistic, realistic, and vocational, the latter having replaced the former trade schools. All subjects taught in these schools were from the Marx, Lenin, and Stalin points of view. Classes in Russian were compulsory. The humanistic high schools emphasized natural sciences, such as physics and chemistry, and geography was taught in connection with the science of political economy. Many of the textbooks used in these schools were Hungarian translations of books used in the Soviet Union. These books were changed about once a year and, often, students were without any books for months because the new editions had not been completed or because the Ministry of Education had not decided on the contents of the new books.
7. In Budapest, there were two Roman Catholic schools which were not nationalized but which were controlled, to a large extent, by the State. Students at these schools were taught in both the anti-Communist and Communist ways. When State supervisors visited the schools, the students were always able to give the impression of knowing their subjects taken from the State-recognized textbooks. Although students who graduated from these two schools could not enter a university, their parents were happy in realizing that their children had received a high standard of education and that it had been given to them in the true Hungarian and Christian spirit.
8. Since the last educational reform in Hungary, it has been very difficult for high-school graduates to enter a university because quotas were set up for students from different social backgrounds, such as the peasant, worker, and intellectual. Students who were admitted under the first group were former workers or peasants who, without any secondary or high-school education, had graduated from special schools which had "special matriculation courses". For several years, the universities were crowded with these special students and none ever failed their examinations because the teachers were blamed when they failed a student. As a result of this, educational standards continued to sink even lower. Several times, students at the Eötvös Loránd University of Philosophy protested against these very low standards of university education and, as a result, were accused by the

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Communists of being reactionaries for not understanding the extreme difficulties encountered by these special graduates.

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9. [redacted], the State apparently realized the dangers of mass-producing unqualified university graduates and, at that time, teachers were given permission to fail any student who could not pass an examination. According to [redacted] an assistant professor at the Budapest Technical University, 60 per cent of the students at the Faculty of Railroad Construction failed to pass their examinations. The same thing happened in the grammar, secondary, and high schools. [redacted] a fourth-grade teacher, told source that she had failed seven out of 43 of her students because they could not read and write. 50X1
10. Although an attempt was apparently being made to raise the educational standard to the pre-World War II level, it is source's opinion that this cannot be done for several years and until a few more reforms have been made. All of the faculties at the Budapest Technical University have been so specialized that, whereas in the past, a civil engineer received a diploma which qualified him in structural, road and railway, bridge and canal construction, etc., these subjects have now been separated and an individual can graduate in any one of them. 50X1
11. Marxism was the principal subject taught by every university faculty, including those of the technical universities, and its teaching was enforced by the "education responsible" and the Association of Working Youth. The Russian language was also compulsory. A student who studied Hungarian literature had two hours of that subject, four hours of Russian, and six hours of Marxism each week. Although students hated to study Marxism and politics, they were forced to do so, and, after a while, some even got interested in it and became idealistic Marxists in spite of the fact that they had experienced the opposite of Marxist teachings in their everyday life. In most cases, students did not accept every thesis of Marxist ideology and they believed that Communism could be achieved in other ways. In general, they rejected Western economic systems and looked down on the culture of the US as well as that of the Soviet Union. 50X1

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